

BARTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED

30th October 2025 AT BARTON VILLAGE HALL

Present: Chair Frank Walsh, Vice-Chair Jones, Cllr Lee, Cllr Burns, Cllr Dobinson, Cllr Wool

Parish Clerk: Charlotte Liversedge-Gell

Members of the Public: Gillian Smalling (Allotment Committee), Rev'd Gillian Lunn

56 Apologies - with approval for apologies	Cllr Cross
57 Declaration of Interest – to receive & consider then decide upon any applications for dispensation	None declared
58 Minutes	Minutes of the meeting held 25th September 2025 were signed and approved.
59 Matters Arising	Matters Arising from the previous meeting minutes - none
60 Correspondence	<p>60(i) NYC informed the PC that the Half Moon ACV moratorium period has finished with no interested parties coming forward at present. Chair Walsh confirmed he had spoken with Punch Taverns and they are not keen to have a meeting with the PC at the present time.</p> <p>60(ii) There are a limited number of sandbags available for residents who may benefit from them. They are by the Village Hall fire escape – please note they are very heavy to lift.</p> <p>60(iii) Chair Walsh has contacted Persimon Homes regarding the overgrown hedge at Silver Meadows that needs tending to. No reply as of yet.</p> <p>60(iv) The PC had notification of a new mandatory declaration that smaller local authorities in England are required to make from the 2025/26 financial year onwards as part of their Annual Governance Statement (AGS). Part of this is the requirement for the Clerk to have a .gov.uk email address that belongs to a domain owned by the PC. Clerk confirmed that the cost would be £57 to setup and an annual fee of £47 thereafter. PC agreed for the Clerk email to be setup this way but not Parish Councillors as this is not a necessity (at present). Clerk to arrange. Clerk also to setup PC WhatsApp group.</p> <p>60(v) AVOVE tree surgeons working on behalf of Northen Power Grid contacted the PC regarding a Lime Tree within the grounds of the VH that is becoming a hazard to the electric network and public. Routine maintenance will be carried out on the tree at no cost to the PC or VH.</p> <p>60(vi) The Transport Depot Land Registry documents have been signed off and completed.</p>

	<p>60(vii) Two defective street lights reported to NYC – the same issue has also affected the matrix board. Works for these to be fixed are under way.</p> <p>60(viii) The electric power supply routing information for the old Transport Depot has been signed off</p> <p>60(ix) Cllr Lee has been approached by residents concerned that public buses are not arriving which is preventing children getting to school as well as people to work and other destinations. Children are penalised if they are late for school – and this would be through no fault of they're own. Clerk to write to Arriva to establish what is causing buses to be late/not turn up at all and to cc Cllr Thompson and MP Rishi Sunak.</p> <p>60(x) It has been asked whether a Grit Bin would be able to be installed at the bottom of Church Lane where there is a recurrent issues with ice on the road. Clerk to contact NYC.</p> <p>60(xi) The PC have been asked whether a Christmas Tree would be provided this year. It was discussed whether a Tree benefits the whole Village – as it comes at a significant cost. Thoughts were that it does not due to its position within the Village. It was agreed that lights along the Cherry Trees and at the Cross would be a better option as it is positioned where everyone would see them and enjoy them. This would require a second power supply post to be installed – Clerk to contact NYC to establish if this can be done from the street lights nearest to the cross/monument. A second power supply would also be of benefit for future Village events that may require power.</p>
<p>61 Public Participation</p>	<p>Revd Gillian Lunn attended the meeting to introduce herself as the new Rector for The East Dere Street Benefice that covers Middleton Tyas, Croft on Tees, Barton, Manfield, Cleasby, Eryholme, Stapleton, Newton Morrell, and Moulton. Having being in post for only five weeks the PC gives a warm welcome.</p> <p>Chair Walsh asked if it would be possible to arrange a gardening weekend at Barton Church to help clear brambles and overgrown areas. Revd Lunn explained she would look into that and get back to the PC.</p> <p>VC Jones asked if there were any plans to put a toilet into the Church. Cllr Wool explained that Melsonby had to raise their own funds to put a toilet into they're Church. Revd Lunn confirmed that that money could not come from the diocese so would need to be raised.</p> <p>There will be a 'Carols and Barrels' evening at the Half Moon 15th December starting at 8pm. Everyone is welcome.</p>
<p>62 Planning</p>	<p>To consider the planning applications within Barton Parish - None received</p>

<p>63 Allotment Rent Increase</p>	<p>The PC received a letter from Mr Hall informing them of a proposed rent increase for the Allotment land from £1000 pa to £1300</p> <p>Ms Smalling from the Allotment Committee explained that the main question was when does the increase apply as allotment tenants are paid up to April. This increase would be applied next year.</p> <p>Cllr Lee asked how many allotment holders it will be split by, Ms Smalling confirmed there are 31 tenants so the increase would cost each person £10/year. Ms Smalling also asked if the rent review could take place more frequently to prevent a large increase as when it is left for five years. This will be passed onto Mr Hall. It was confirmed the increase would be from April 2026</p>
<p>64 Police & Crime Update</p>	<p>September – two crimes within the PARISH.</p> <p>1 x theft from a vehicle</p> <p>1x assault without injury</p>
<p>65 NYC Update</p>	<p>NYC COUNCILLOR’S REPORT SEPTEMBER 2025.</p> <p>BOUNDARY COMMISSION.</p> <p>The original plan set out by the Boundary Commission was due to be confirmed in tablets of stone on 2nd September. There were however many howls of complaint from individuals, PCs and Councillors and others in various places so the review which was set in place has been extended allowing further consultation until this month.</p> <p>The final decision on the boundaries of the 89 council divisions is now set to be announced in early January. This all really makes no difference in our part of the world to what was originally planned.</p> <p>SCOTCH CORNER.</p> <p>Well despite what we were told in June there is no sign yet of work recommencing on the Designer Outlet. I have asked the developer for a further update and was told only last week that it would be another 3 weeks before further information would be forthcoming. The knock-on effect is that the promised upgrade to the transformer and power system would hopefully mean that power cuts which many residents in villages like Stapleton, Cleasby and Manfield have to endure, will not be resolved in the near future.</p> <p>And whilst the upgrade to the A66 which we have waited for 4 decades for will now commence, specific dates for the work are still to be revealed. The one that many are waiting for is the plan for Scotch Corner roundabout. Again, if there was progress on the Designer Outlet we may have a better idea of what is likely to happen in terms of the roundabout.</p> <p>SCHOOL TRANSPORT.</p> <p>I am working on an initiative to try to persuade bus companies like Hodgsons and Arriva to alter their routes in some cases and tweak</p>

their times in others so that pupils from villages like Cleasby, Manfield, Eppleby and Aldbrough can use their services to travel to and from the Richmond Schools. Hodgsons charge £1 per journey for anyone under the age of 19. This would mean a cost of £390 or so for a pupil who attends every school day throughout the year, hence a saving of more than half of the County cost of £816pa. Arriva charge £1.20 per journey. The Hodgson service from Barnard Castle to Richmond taking in villages from Newsham via Gilling should fit the bill now.

However, the Darlington to Richmond service doesn't arrive in Richmond until 9.40am. A new service would be required from Croft, Dalton on Tees, North Cowton, Moulton and Middleton Tyas and this I am working on.

Integrated transport including bus services is part of the Mayor's portfolio. A substantial grant was awarded by the government to support integrated transport (some £6 million).

NYC's dire financial position is going to require considerable 'thinking outside the box'. I fully appreciate that no one wants to pay for something they have had for free but as things stand, without a further substantial increase in funding from the government, which earlier this year they said not only would there be no further funding, but they actually imposed further cuts in funding, then NYC will face bankruptcy in the year 28/29.

Naturally we are working on whole raft of savings initiatives to avoid this terrible prospect. The hated new Home to School Transport Policy was one. But the cost of school transport in the school year just ended was £52.5 million against a Government grant for this service of £44 million.

RICHMOND SCHOOL.

I had a most interesting and informative meeting with 3 Governors and the head Jenna Potter in June. It helped me to have a better understanding of their admissions policy which I really appreciated. I have had one parent contact me in May saying that due to the school being full they had been advised that their child would not be able to have a place. Given that pupils are being bused from Northallerton, Catterick and Leyburn this seemed harsh treatment for a child from a village not 5 miles from Richmond. However, the school were at pains to point out that they would do their utmost to accommodate children from villages which are in their catchment area. There is a right to appeal if all else fails.

I had a similar meeting with the head of SFX Jacqueline Prime this week. This too was a most interesting and informative visit to a faith school and certainly helped me greatly to understand their ethos. I now have an understanding of their admissions policy and other factors in the day to day running of this Ofsted Outstanding school. The SFX admissions policy is one which I am frequently asked about by parents.

Well done to the staff and students of both schools who have vibrant, friendly and very successful settings.

WIND FARM ON FELDOM MOOR

It is very likely that a proposal will be brought forwards for 20 wind turbines with a tip height of up to 200m on a 2,700 acre (1,100 hectare) site on open moorland on Feldom Ranges south west of villages like Gayles. My understanding is that Fred Olsen Renewables is likely to submit an application to the Secretary of State for a 100MV wind farm. They have a dedicated website for the project <https://hopemoor.co.uk/>. This is a NSIP: Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Project and so will not be determined by NYC.

It has not been submitted yet and NYC has not been consulted under any pre-application process. No comments on behalf of NYC have been submitted yet. Their website says, 'We anticipate our first stage of public consultation will be held locally in the coming months. This will be followed by a second stage of public consultation later in 2026 at which we'll be seeking further feedback on our proposals'.

I would suggest that this will not be a proposal which will be welcomed by many.

RICHMOND SWIMMING POOL.

Following a public consultation which resulted in an overwhelming majority wishing for the pool to be kept open, it is proposed to spend £1.2 million to be taken from the strategic reserve fund, to do all necessary repairs including the main problem which is the roof. This work is likely to take 6 months or more.

But we need to be clear that when the pool is back up and running, it will be a case of 'Use it or lose it'. There were some 3,000 respondents to the public consultation but the number of people using Richmond pool is a fraction of this number.

UPDATE**RAILWAY BRIDGE AT CROFT**

Further to my very recent report sent last week, I am sending this brief message firstly in relation to the railway bridge at Croft. A licence has been issued to Railtrack who are to do urgent repair work on the bridge. This will be over 93 days and will commence on 8th November. The road will be closed overnight from 10pm until 8am each weekend between 8th November 2025 until 8th February 2026 and a 24hr closure will be in place from 20th December 2025 until 4th January 2026.

Railtrack are responsible for advising residents of these closures together with signposting diversion routes. Further information can be found on:

<https://causewayone.network>.

SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS BEING REVOKED.

	<p>Concern has been raised by some PCs that section 106 agreements are being revoked for small developments. This has been raised by Ravensworth and Aldbrough PCs and no doubt there will be others. I can well understand the concern particularly when you consider what I said recently regarding NYC's finances in the year 28/29.</p> <p>A mistake was made by RDC Planning back in 2019 and S106 agreements should not have been made for small developments. They are in fact illegal and therefore unenforceable. The developments concerned were granted planning permission during the period 2019 until March 2022 when RDC ceased to exist. No doubt you will wonder what is meant by a small development. I think it is where the number of houses does not exceed 5, but I will check on this.</p> <p>EMPTY COUNCIL HOUSES.</p> <p>Concern has been expressed by a number of PCs and residents that when Council owned properties come vacant there is often a long gap until the property is relet.</p> <p>This means not only a loss of revenue to NYC but also very often a property is empty when people are looking for a home. The reason for this is that the Government has made it mandatory for property owners from 2026 to have an EPC ie. Energy Performance Certificate of C as a minimum before they can rent a property out. An extensive work program has therefore been implemented so that insulation upgrades will be carried out on any Council owned house to get the property up to the required standard prior to being rented out to a new tenant.</p> <p>Angus Thompson.</p>
<p>66 Play Area Inspections</p>	<p>Chair Walsh reported that the Play Area is in good repair. The astro turf on the new area is bedding in – this area will be seeded in the Spring.</p>
<p>67 Financial Matters</p>	<p>67(i) Salary Payment & Accounts Payable: Clerk salary £296, CE & CM Walkers grass cutting £312, E Hall (Allotment Rent) £500 Received: VAT Refund £8139</p> <p>67(ii) To receive (an update with regard to) the current bank balance as of 19th Sept as Oct statement not yet received: £12464.80</p>
<p>68 Next Meeting</p>	<p>To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting due to be held on Thursday 27th November 2025 at 7pm held in the Village Hall</p>

MEETING CLOSED 8.15PM